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ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL FORESTS

Julie A. Molzahn

photo by: Robert Libershal, Tujunga Ranger District Fire Prevention Technician

This is a regular occurrence on the Tujunga Ranger District with any large size sign. This was done by the hispanic 13th Street Gang - Florence Avenue branch.

ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAM FOR

THE NATIONAL FORESTS

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ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Anti-Graffiti Program for the National Forests

ABSTRACT: Graffiti has become a problem in the Urban National Forest of Southern California. The majority of new products, ideas and challenges in recreation often develop in the Urban National Forest first, then spread to the rest of the National Forest System in time. The intent of developing the program is to have a proactive way to manage graffiti in place before the rest of the National Forest System experiences the potential overwhelming costs, resource damage and time consuming actions of having to react to the graffiti problem.

The program provides the framework for a three faceted approach to address the problem:

1. Education
2. Abatement
3. Law Enforcement

The aim of this paper is to make the reader aware of the of what graffiti is. The talk about the differant types of graffiti and the cultural aspects of graffitiers. Then provide the framework for a anti-graffiti program that can be utilized anywhere in the Forest Service.

Keywords: Graffiti, Gangs, Taggers, Education, Abatement, Enforcement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Anti-Graffiti Program for the National Forests

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Summary:

The intent of this project is to develop an anti-graffiti program for the National Forests. This program would utilize a three prong approach to addressing the problem; Education, Abatement, and Enforcement. This is built on the premise that one single part would not be able to reach all the needed publics. Each area is further broken down by people that potentially could be influenced and programs to be developed. Enforcement also has the added extra area of laws to be looked at.

Research into this problem began before attending Clemson due to the impact graffiti has on the Angeles National Forest. With downtown Los Angeles 20 minutes away from the Tujunga District Office, it is hard to separate the urban city from the urban forest. In fact, the Tujunga District, like the rest of the Forest, is a defacto urban park.

It became apparent that several things were going on, both in the forest and surrounding cities, to abate graffiti but it was a never ending battle. In Big Tujunga Canyon, the recreation crew could easily repaint the develop site bathrooms every three days to a week to keep up with the graffiti removal.

This author set out to gather information on all the available resources for the graffiti problem. There is no overall guiding force on this problem and the program development of any kind was scattered. One ranger district was doing something, another nothing, and the third something opposite. Recreation was not talking to law enforcement while adjoining agencies were duplicating efforts. An overall program woul be the best way to overcome all these problems and efforts. To be effective it also needs to be available to agencies outside the Forest Service.

The first key was to talk to the law enforcement groups which in turn lead to the Angeles National Forest becoming a member of the Multi-Agency Graffiti Intervention Committee (MAGIC). MAGIC is trying to organize and coordinate the anti-graffiti agencies in the Los Angeles Basin.

This resulted in learning that the common misconception that the street gangs were doing all the graffiti was wrong. Gangs themselves are very culturally diverse in both their interactions and even through their graffiti. Gangs aren't just Hispanic or African-American but Stoner or Heavy Metal/Satanic groups and also tagging crews.

Taggers are groups of people who are solely out to graffiti areas. These groups or crews started out non-violent but have evolved into street gangs that have no set area or purpose other than to graffiti. If a person approached a graffitier they may be shot at or stabbed. This little known fact is very important for recreation personal making contacts.

Graffiti is a very unique form of communication and there is marked differences between gang and tagging graffiti. Graffiti is also being used by drug dealers to mark drug buy sites and types of drugs available. Gang and graffiti behavior starts has early as 9 years old in families with gang tradition. This makes the educational aspect of the program very important.

Many groups are concentrating on the removal or abatement of graffiti. It is never truly removed but displaced. An area may be heavily targeted for removal efforts, and while this area stays clean, another area becomes graffitied.

Enforcement is where the longest contact and most expertise lies in the fight against graffiti. Law enforcement has been dealing with gangs and associated problems for decades. There are officers who specialize in reading certain types of graffiti. The challenge is that with the jails and courts filled with felony-charged, violent criminals, a graffitier will go free. In the Los Angeles Basin alone, $150 million dollars worth of graffiti damage was reported in 1991. This dollar figure has stayed consistent from 1991 to 1995. The estimated figure nationally was $4 billion.

Many employees in the Forest Service, outside of Southern California or urban forests, may say this is not their problem. Almost all the new recreational products and forest problems facing the Forest Service showed up in Southern California first. From mountain bikes to hang gliders to dumps to shooting areas they are spreading across the country. A proactive management approach is needed before the graffiti problem on the rest of the National Forest system goes beyond "Bobby loves Sally" on the bathroom or rocks.

The three prong program offered in this paper is a way to possibly avoid the impacts of graffiti seen on the Southern California Forests. This approach is based on cooperation with other agencies and external groups such has those being emphasized by the Chief today.

ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL FORESTS

INTRODUCTION

Graffiti is as old as mankind and probably just as controversial now as it was in the times of our forefathers. There is a raging controversy over whether graffiti is art or vandalism that has spurned many articles and letter writing campaigns in Los Angeles County. This paper does not address this issue though who knows if today's graffiti may be the petroglyphes of the year 3000 A.D. The intent here is to discuss and map out a possible solution for the graffiti problem that haunts our national forest system. From the "Betty loves Bobby" in a bathroom in Montana to hardcore gang and neo-nazi graffiti scribbled over rocks, walls, pavement, and structures in a Southern California forest, graffiti is a problem.

In various literature and discussions one thing seems to be clear, the Southern California forests lead the nation in trends. Hang gliding, mountain bikes, paragliding, and bungee jumping, they all happened here first just as the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic issues have surfaced here first. While at Clemson, people were discussing a variety of evolving issues on their respective forests. These issues were already Southern California realities. In this light, graffiti is heading nationwide for the National Forest System. As a District Recreation Officer on the Angeles National Forest, graffiti is not only reality but an everyday occurrence that is costly in terms of time, resource damage, facility maintenance, and a major drain on personnel.

GRAFFITI DEFINED

What is graffiti? Webster's New World Dictionary defines it as "an inscription, slogan, drawing, etc. scratched, scribbled, or drawn, often crudely, on a wall or other public surface." It is derived from the Italian graffio, a scribbling, which in turn comes from the Latin graphium, a scratch and that is derived from the Greek grapheion, stylus: from resemblance of the scion to a pointed pencil and Greek graphein, to write, orig., scratch or incise which origins are Indo-European gerebh, carve, crab. The origins of graffiti are as old as the human written word.

Graffiti has many different meanings to those involved in or dealing with the activity. Graffiti can be has simple as carving initials on a tree or as elaborate as a taggers "piece" on a rock wall. To police it can be read for information; to the public it maybe an eyesore; and to the landowner, it is an unwanted damage to property.

It is precisely because of the different interpretations that graffiti has been overlooked for so long as a problem. In the context of the National Forest System graffiti is normally "Bobby loves Betty" on a bathroom wall or maybe a rock wall a couple times a year. Graffiti is a big city problem not a forest problem. That may be true now, for the majority of the National Forest System

as well as the National Parks and Bureau of Land Management Lands, but it is not true in the urban forests of Southern California. Graffiti is a source of major resource damage, and facilities maintenance, consuming field personnel time and recreational budgets.

The costs estimated for the Los Angeles Basin of damage and some cleanup are $150,000,000 for graffiti. The Rapid Transit District (RTD) for Los Angeles County spends $18,000,000 a year or $1,200,000 a month in cleaning buses alone. The Angeles National Forest has not really generated figures on the damage done or cleanup costs for graffiti. It is estimated that at least $60,000 per year per district in wages, vehicles, and materials could be spent on the Angeles National Forest for graffiti removal alone. That does not include replacement costs of signs, picnic table boards, replacement siding, etc.. or resource damage costs. The $60,000 figure gives the forest a figure of $300,000 needed per year for graffiti removal. If you add the resource damage costs and volunteer labor the forest would easily top $1,000,000 per year in needs to offset the graffiti problem.

With this in mind, an anti-graffiti program is needed to address the problem. There have been several attempts to develop programs. At present, pieces of programs developed by various agencies and several Ranger Districts on the Angeles do exist. There is no overall direction existing at this time especially in the Forest Service. The paper here proposes to develop a comprehensive program that could be implemented to combat the problem where it exists heavily and be pro-active before it starts elsewhere.

"Many recreation uses are emerging on the National Forests in Southern California, developing and applying consistent standards here could help forests in other parts of the country deal with these uses as they expand to other areas." (Hartley, 1986) Then the paper lists several uses that were evolving on Southern California forest such as; mountain bikes, parasailing, recreation residence issues, off road vehicle areas, etc.. At the same time the uses are emerging so are the problems. Various speakers at Clemson from the Washington Office of the Forest Service spoke of emerging issues that the forests need to be aware of such as; proposed garbage dumps, increasing violent crime, shooting areas, increasing vandalism, etc.. These are already realities for the Southern California forests. Knowing this, it is reasonable to expect that the vandalism problem of graffiti will increase on forests other than the Urban Southern California forests.

GRAFFITI TYPES

Graffiti comes in many forms. The are cultural differences in the writing of graffiti as well as the slang that goes with graffiti. Graffiti is a form of communication. It declares everything from declarations of love to what kinds of drugs are for sale at the graffiti location to a challenge for gang war. There are police officers who specialize in interpreting graffiti for messages. These officers have become very specialized, usually by cultures, on deciphering what has been written.

The first form of graffiti that comes to mind, is the typical high school kids out painting "Bobby loves Sally" or "Central High is number one" on a bathroom wall or very often on a favorite rock ledge out in the woods. This also can include carving initials into trees and picnic tables. It is never very serious and often limited to a favorite hangout or necking area in the forest.

The next type people think about is gang graffiti. A gang defined by Webster's Collegiate Dictionary is: a group of people associated together specifically; an organized group of criminals or a group of youths from one neigborhood banded to together for a social reason; often specifically, a band of juvenile delinquents. The high school kids above may be classified has a gang but for the purposes of this discussion the second definition including juvenile delinquents will be used.

The movie West Side Story romanticized gangs in the early sixties. In that movie one can see graffiti used to mark the "turf" or territory of the Jets and Sharks gangs. There is a distinct difference in graffiti styles of various gangs today. The book Understanding Street Gangs by Robert K. Jackson and Wesley D. McBride gives the best understanding of the differences in gang graffiti. The information below comes from this book.

Hispanic Gang Graffiti in California dates back to the early 1940's, and is an important part of gang tradition. "These gang members call their inscriptions plaquesos, or placas. The slang term, plaquesos is derived from the Spanish, placa, meaning "a sign" or "plaque". When gang members talk of writing on a wall they call it "throwing a placa on a wall." It is not just graffiti. It proclaims to the world the status of the gang and offers a challenge to rivals. Moreover, graffiti writing is a structured, acquired skill. It takes a great deal of time and practice to perfect the Hispanic style of wall writing."

Black gangs also use graffiti but do not have the same flair as Hispanic gang graffiti writers. Their graffiti started to appear in the early 1970's crudely but has been refined over the years. "Much of it is loaded with profanity and expressions of individual power, in contrast to the expressions of group or gang power found in Hispanic graffiti. Symbolism is obvious and crude drawings of weapons are often seen."

A new type of graffiti appearing is that of Stoner gangs. This type may also be found outside of urban settings because it involves not a traditional gang group but the heavy metal and occult themes are used in this type which differentiates it from other gang graffiti. "The names of heavy metal rock groups ...have been noted. Drugs and occult go hand-in-hand. Satanic-type drawings have been noted, which have meanings familiar only to those within the Stoner gangs... Stoners use symbolism in their graffiti more than any other gang. The upside-down cross with the numbers 666 at the ends, and the circle with a star in the center are frequently seen.... These symbols are Satanic and originated in the Satanic churches. The gang names that Stoner members pick for themselves are generally demonic in nature or signify a violent, anti-social act."

The above paragraphs describe the more generally known graffiti groups. The next two groups are fairly new on the scene but are having a tremendous impact quickly especially the first group, taggers.

A tagger or tagging gang are people who specialize in graffiti only. The taggers have their own individual style of writing. The gangs are made up of individuals who may work as a gang or "crew" or by themselves. Taggers have their own slang and personal styles. Graffiti to them is art, a way to express themselves. Taggers are after recognition and fame above all. Their goal is to get has much recognition by "putting up" or writing as much graffiti as they humanly can. There are often competitions between individuals and groups to see who can "put up" the most in a certain period of time.

Taggers are traced back to New York City and the subway writing. The ultimate for a tagger is a "piece" or masterpiece that takes up a whole wall, side of a bus, or subway car. Their graffiti is elaborate with personal signatures but often can not be read outside of the tagging groups. Today taggers have newsletters coast-to-coast and in several foreign countries like Australia and the Netherlands. Their network is tremendous unlike gangs who stay very localize with exception of the well known Crips and Bloods. A recent trend is being seen by local law enforcement in Southern California. Tagging gangs are becoming violent gangs like their counterparts. The incidents of theft and even violent injury are increasing by this group. The fastest evolution seen in Los Angeles County from nonviolent gang to violent gang was 2 years by the tagging group "Nothing But Trouble". (Personal communication RTD police officers Lee Tainter and Roy Romero)

The last type of graffiti relates to drug deals. This type is used by both gangs and drug dealers. The graffiti is used to indicate sites with drugs for sale, who is selling, and what is being told. It is very specific graffiti for a very specific purpose.

As stated in the opening and seen throughout, graffiti is a form of communication. That is why there is so much concern with the graffiti in the urban environment and the desire to abate it before it gets worse in the National Forest. If not totally abated, it remove it as quickly as possible before it escalates into a challenge for a fight or drug selling spot.

One example to this point. The graffiti in Big Tujunga Canyon on the Tujunga Ranger District during the summer and fall of 1991 indicated that two gangs where challenging each other to a fight. One day a probation crew working for recreation department was in a picnic area when two vans pulled up and gang members came out of the vans welding baseball bats. The crew leader called in on the Forest Service radio asking for help and immediately left the area. Fortunately the two gangs go back in the vans and went elsewhere. How is it for certain that they were gang members? The probation crew is from a nearby camp, made up of juvenile offenders, and members of the crew recognized their own gangs coming out of the vans. It could of easily happened on a weekend or during the summer when that picnic area has at least 500 people in it instead of a Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. in the fall. There also could have been automatic weapons instead of baseball bats. The district was fortunate this time, what about next time?

Photo by: Robert Libershal, Tujunga Ranger District Fire Prevention Technician

Etching on a tree in a campground. SWP or Socialist Workers Party represents graffiti from a white power group.

Photo by: Louis Pena, Tujunga District Recreation Technician

A picnic ground restroom wall that has been graffitied by the hispanic gang, San Fernando Valley. The regular gang members are on top, two leaders in the middle with larger letters, and the gang name initials at the bottom. The crosses across the writing represent a challenge by another gang to a fight.

Photo by: Rolando Santiago, Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACP)
This is an example of gang writing by the hispanic Pacomia 13th Street Gang. The top line is the gang's name with the bottom line listing members of the gang: Loko, Creer, and Frost.

Photo by: Rolando Santiago, LACP
This wall is an example of graffiti by a tagging crew, Kings Rule Society or KRS. Notice the different lettering types, several different colors of paints, and a variety of monikers or names of the crew are shown.

Photo by: Rolando Santiago, LACP
This fence was tagged by Sigh and Skeet, two member of the tagging crew Down Fuck Criminals or DFC. This shows the more elaborate tagging work that is beyond regular street writing.

Photo by: Rolando Santiago, LACP
This wall represents a tagging "piece" or masterpiece by the tagging crew La Raza Unida or the United Race.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

To address this problem a several prong approach in needed to reach the graffitiers and potential graffitiers at all times. The approach includes 3 specific areas to be addressed by programs; education, abatement and enforcement. Under each of these areas are more specific information to develop each area further. Several programs that exist follow these guidelines in part or whole. The best Forest Service example would be Fire Prevention and the Smokey Bear program.

DEVELOPMENT OF ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAMS

I. EDUCATION

A. PEOPLE
   1) Elementary Students
   2) Reachable Older Kids
   3) Parents
   4) Employees

B. PROGRAMS
   1) "Riti Raccoon" along Smokey Program Lines
   2) Environmental Education
   3) Legal Ramifications
   4) Other Careers

II. ABATEMENT

A. PEOPLE
   1) Graffitiers
   2) Public Service Organizations
   3) Law Enforcement
   4) Community Service/Courts
   5) Media

B. PROGRAMS
   1) Public
      a) Volunteer Groups
      b) Community Work Days
   2) Court
      a) Court Crews
      b) Enforced Community Service

III. ENFORCEMENT

A. GROUPS
   1) Municipal
   2) County
   3) State
   4) Federal

B. PROGRAMS
   1) Internal Training
   2) External Training
   3) Multi-agency committees
   4) Advisory Groups

C. LAWS
   1) Types on books
   2) Enforcement Levels

I. EDUCATION

This is the most pro-active management tool available to managers today. The whole premise is to educate to avoid the behavior that is not acceptable in this case graffiti before it starts.

Dr David E. Simcox et al. summarized the problem facing Southern California managers in his 1989 report:

> "Angeles National Forest user groups and their preferred activities are atypical of those encountered in the majority of forests in the U.S. due to the tremendous variability of ethnic and culture groups using the forest. Management of recreation use areas has become an increasing challenge to Forest Service personnel due to language and differing perceptions of appropriate types of land management and recreation use between managers and user groups. Such user groups are primarily urban based and often represent ethnic and culture groups that are relatively new to the United States and do not have or have not yet assimilated a land ethic that is consistent with the policies and mission of the U.S. Forest Service. These conflicting values create problems in rules enforcement, visitor conflicts, and environmental protection."
>
> "By investigating communications and social networking systems present among forest users, it may be possible to identify more efficient and effective ways of conveying important information to the various user groups. By establishing and understanding these lines of communications, managers can more effectively educate users about appropriate uses, conflict avoidance, safety, and rules and regulations. Additionally, environmental stewardship and public support may be encouraged over the long run if effective channels can be identified for the development of volunteer and educational programs."

The Angeles National Forest has recognized the need to educate people with other than english has a language. Though the emphasis at this time is the large Hispanic population other languages are being looked at. When Fire Prevention puts on a program in a largely Hispanic populated school or community group, an employee that is bilingual will assist with translations of the educational program. It is an assumption of this paper that future programs will be developed to at least reach the Hispanic populations, which make up seventy percent of the Angeles Forest visitors at this time.

A. People

One thing to understand is that there is no way to reach all of the people regardless of the route taken; education, abatement, or enforcement. There is always an element that will never change their attitudes or behaviors. Now that has been stated, education is an extremely good tool to reach those who are not yet participating in the undesirable activity, in this case graffiti, and those who can influence people that are graffiting.

First group of people to look at are the elementary age children. These are the kids that are young, impressionable and eager to learn new things. This becomes especially important with children of gang members. Many gangs of the Hispanic and African-American cultures are now second and third generation. This is especially true in the Hispanic barrio's of Southern California. Children start their gradual integration into a gang at about 9 or 10 years old. Jackson and McBride state "In some areas, children begin learning it (graffiti) at an early age and it can be found on notebooks, school papers, bus benches, tennis shoes, and even matchbook covers." Parents that were gang members, male or female gang members, often encourage their children to belong to a gang. This makes it even more important to reach these kids very early in their lives and education is the logical choice to use.

The next group is junior high, high school, and young adults that are either not participating or are not yet strongly involved in graffiti activities. The same type of messages for elementary students could be used here but with a beefed up "cool" theme aimed at young adults. Education here may also involve the consequences if caught in the illegal behavior.

Parents are many times the key to not encouraging, stopping or changing their childrens behavior. The messages must reach them and they must believe that graffiting is not just kids out for a good time. The Los Angeles County Probation Department Officers I have talked to state that the parents are a critical part of their work to alter behavior of juveniles in their custody. (Personal communication with Deputies Richard Saenz, Robby Robinson, and Harris) It is the parents who often allow their children to go out late at night, when most of the graffiti occurs, or do not want to believe their child is involved with graffiti and possible associated behaviors.

The last group of people are too often the forgotten group, agency employees. If the employees do not believe there is a problem or understand the magnitude of the problem, then it will be difficult to implement a program. It is very often the case that a manager does not believe there is a problem thus leaving the field personnel to deal with the problem with very little support.

B. Programs

At present there are no real programs that address graffiti education. Graffiti is covered in some environmental education programs discussed below but does not give the needed emphasis. The first program is a new development along the lines of Smokey Bear or Woodsey Owl programs. In talking with members of Los Angeles Camp Karl Holton for juvenile offenders,

the individuals said that they don't pay attention or relate to the "Anglo" Smokey or Woodsey. After much discussion with them and their supervisor, Officer Rolando Santiago, they set to work drawing types of messages that appeal to them with characters they could relate to. The majority of the crew is Hispanic and have gang associations. There was a high turnover of offenders who started the drawings July, 1991 to March, 1992 but the character settled on was agreeable to all.

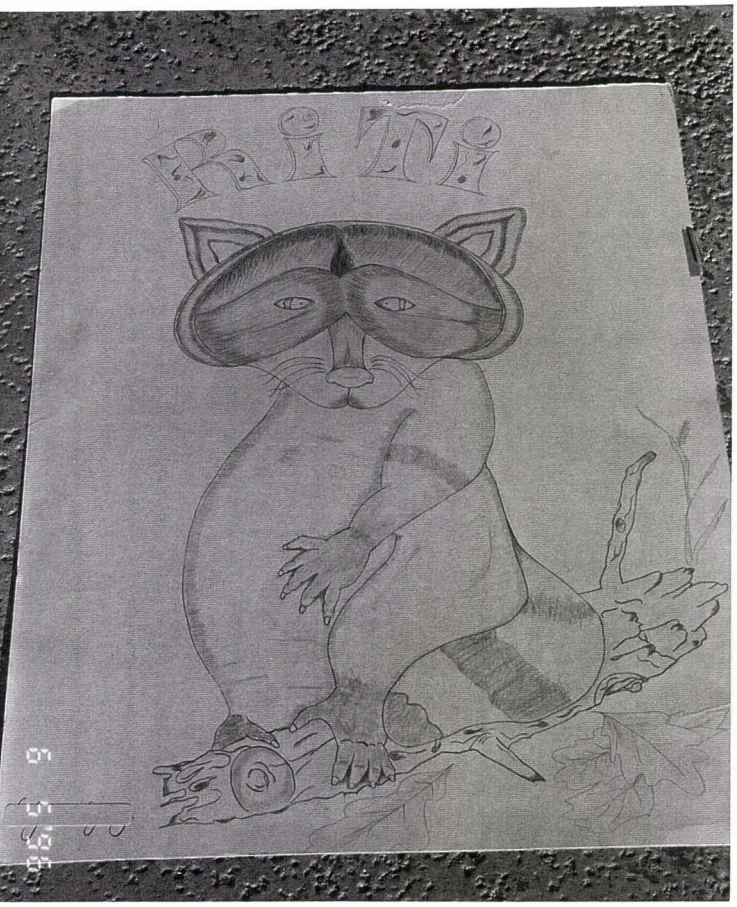
Some sideboards were established; the character had to appeal to small children as well as adults, no particular gang dress, no weapons, and the character needed to be easily copied yet unique. Then following the Smokey and Woodsey lines, an animal was decided upon instead of a person (very difficult to have a person to appeal to all cultures). The candidates were; a snake, a fox, a vulture, or a raccoon. From this "Riti" (from graffiti) "Raccoon" was developed. Doing this exercise, I discovered that within a gang there are the graffiti artist (their term) and the graffiti writers and the slogan makers. The artist does the drawing, writers do the lettering and the slogan makers dream up the verse. It is a very unique process to observe in action and is very efficient.

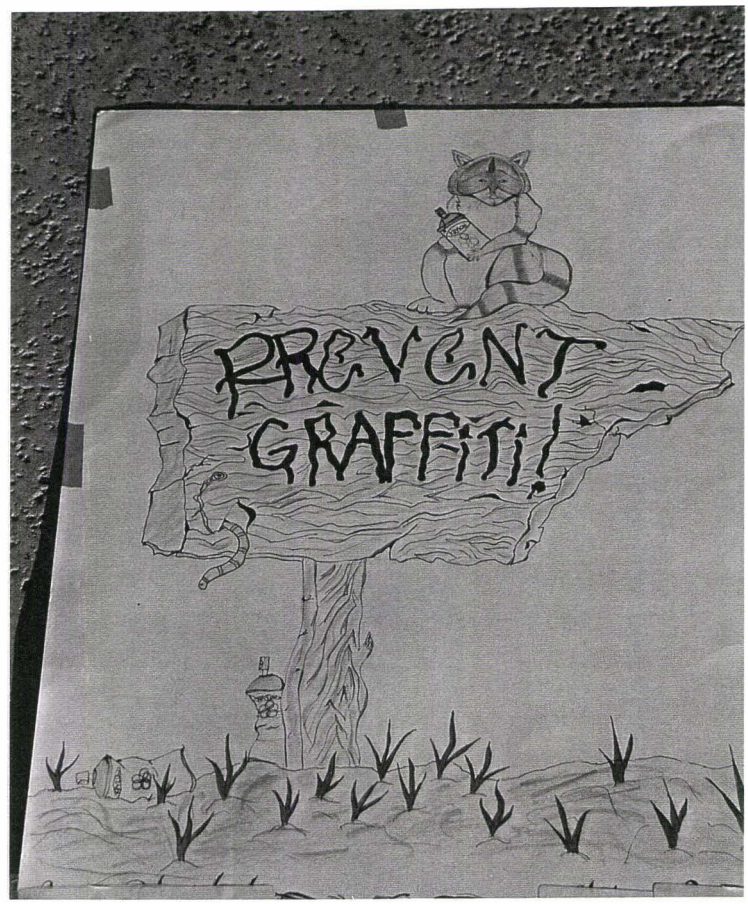
"Riti" is at present being refined. "Riti" often has spray paint cans nearby to signify the major culprits of the graffiti problem. Much refinement has gone into the character. It is difficult to explain to people who have never drawn anything except graffiti or pictures of crimes why 5 inch long claws and a snear may not be exactly appealing to a child. Also, there was a tendency to want to dress "Riti" up in gang style clothing. Clothing varied by gangs though more so by culture. With members of different gangs present in the drawing groups this was quickly straighten out.

The "Riti Raccoon" program will be designed much like the "Smokey Bear" program is today. The program will be used by itself to represent an anti-graffiti message. It will have educational classes designed to be given to school children, or taken to fairs, meetings, jamboree's, etc.. This is all in conceptual form at this time but since the message is being developed with the help of graffitiers crossing the cultural barriers from the "Anglo" Forest Service tendencies it may be more accepted, and therefore accomplishing more.

The Los Angeles County School District is incorporating an anti-graffiti message in their trial environmental education programs that are being tested at 2 area high schools and feeders at this time. Environmental Educational programs are another way to incorporate the anti-graffiti message in with other messages to outreach school children and the greater population. This becomes especially true in light of the recent environmental movement that has re-occurred emphasizing the need for the educational aspects.

The Mt. Baldy Ranger District on the Angeles National Forest has recently entered into a cost share partnership with the Upland School District to develop an environmental educational program that will include anti-graffiti as part of the circulumn. The programs will be based out of the Mt. Baldy School Interpretive Center.





Photos by: Alberto Ortega, Tujunga District Recreation Aide

These are various representations of "Riti Raccoon" as drawn by the youth from the Los Angeles County Probation Camp Karl Holton. No names of the are available of the graffitiers as they were under-aged juvenile offenders.

The only drawback of using environmental education to deliver the anti-graffiti message is that it can get lost. As a week long course, or even as a bi-weekly subject for a semester course in environmental education, thi is not enough attention to this topic. This does not give the highlight to one or two needed areas like graffiti.

Legal ramifications is another educational area. One may think this belongs in enforcement but it has a real application in education. Too often, the kids who are on the verge of doing an illegal activity or parents do not realize the penalties involved in such an activity. It is important to get this information out on the street. Once out on the street, it is often spread by word of mouth amongst the population that participates in the activity targeted. If this message can reach kids who are on the border of the activity and stops them from becoming active than it has done what needs to be done. The same with parents, they very often don't realize the implications of what their child is involved in. At this time, the courts in Los Angeles County are holding parents liable for the damage underaged children cause with graffiti. There are some graffitiers who have caused up to $70,000 in property damage to one agency's property and they often hit multiple areas. A parent could easily be cited a $100,000 judgement if their child is prolific.

In talking with graffitiers and people who deal with them daily such has probation officers or law enforcement officers, there is no knowledge of career opportunities to channel their creative talents into. The graphic arts or design fields are totally unknown to them. Some of this may be linked to culture. The cultures found in Southern California especially with the various Hispanic peoples are highly into machismo or more commonly known has macho attitudes. The idea of a male going into an art field is totally foreign to way to think. The idea of a career has an artist is not acceptable like a graffitier is. There is real talent in many of these graffitiers that could be channeled into productive, high paying careers. Type of pay is the question that always ask about by any graffitier.

II. ABATEMENT

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition abatement is the lessening or reduction; an amount deducted; extent of a reduction. Has one might now realize this is not total removal of the problem, that is not possible nor foreseeable in the future. Abatement is going into an area, usually specifically targeted, and getting rid of all graffiti on that specific site. This is done in a variety of ways like painting over, sand or water blasting are usually the favorite methods. There has been development of anti-graffiti removal products which often work well on smooth, nonporous features but it is difficult to get a cleaner for rocks or block structures. The products also cost at least $8 to $10 dollars a gallon and the cost can get prohibited very quickly for an agency with a limited budget.

A. People

It is necessary to involve a variety of people here to insure that this effort is not a waste of time and makes a positive impact.

First and foremost the graffitiers themselves need to be involved. This is a good exercise in "you do the crime, you do the time" especially when graffitiers are often not put into jail. Los Angeles County Probation Department, Graffiti Reduction Improvement Program (G.R.I.P.), which targets taggers, has found that after 180 hours of community service, with graffiti removal a big part of the punishment, that taggers do not return to their former graffiti tagging habits.

Public Service Organizations are often the basis for graffiti abatement projects. In the Los Angeles area several organizations are now based on graffiti removal/abatement only. These are often the groups that organize the large scale cleanups and do the continual cleanup activities for graffiti. The counties and cities very often depend on these groups to help the public works departments cope with the ever growing graffiti problems.

Three groups are helping with the Angeles National Forest efforts. The first group is the Big Santa Anita Historical Society. They have donated at least one water/sand blaster to each of the five ranger districts and some districts have receive up to three blasters from the society for graffiti abatement efforts.

Another group is the California Environmental Project who sponserse large sized trash cleanups on the Angeles National Forest. The Angeles National Forest,with funds generated from the Los Angeles County receipts for San Gabriel Canyon and urban forest grants, has put together a partnership with this group to work on graffiti removal and trash pickup on the district. With this as a base, their director is going after more private funding to help other areas of the forest and parks in the Los Angeles County area. Another group looking to help at this time is the Sylmar Graffiti Busters in the Tujunga Ranger District. This group is based along the City of Los Angeles boundary on the District. They are an organization devoted to graffiti abatement only and have been licensed by the county to cover many residential areas along the San Fernando front country of the Angeles National Forest.

Law enforcement is also needed in these efforts. The presence of officers at cleanups or even supervising some efforts re-enforces that this activity is illegal. Seeing an officer in uniform gives the public a reassurance that something is being done which emphasizes to offenders that there are penalties when they get caught.

The courts and community service groups go together. Community service groups have sprung up in areas where the courts need another alternative besides incarceration. A community service group contracts to the courts to find projects to work off the hours required by the court in lieu of jail and/or fine. By getting these groups to participate in graffiti removal or setting up crews of graffitiers that have been caught to do removal then there is another way to do abatement. It is important to let the courts know that this is a viable alternative for graffitiers.

Other groups of people are utilizing the Forest Service Volunteer programs. Too often we channel volunteers into the typical work of trail maintenance, develop site cleanup, or staffing information centers. This can be a great labor pool to get abatement efforts started on the Forest.

The last group to get organized and behind abatement efforts is the media. This actually goes for the whole graffiti problem but when there is a cleanup it is easier by far to get the media involved. It is an activity they can parley into a human interest story or even a bigger story if they are brought in right. The graffitiers love nothing better than to get their name in the media so the media must be aware of this to downplay the graffitiers and up-play the removal effort.

B. Programs

The public can be source of assistance when developing abatement programs. A volunteer/human resource program can be utilized by the agency for graffiti abatement purposes. As mentioned above the volunteers are a great pool of labor to be used. It maybe needed to develop something just to focus on anti-graffiti possible along the line of a "Ritti Raccoon" volunteer patch or award. There are some of these groups now outside the agency but they are not organized into a large anti-graffiti group. The National Graffiti Information Network (NGIN) is trying to accumulate a listing of such volunteer groups into their network so at least there is a clearinghouse of such organizations.

Another way to bring attention to the graffiti abatement effort is to sponser one day or weekend cleanup efforts. These efforts often generate interest in the problem being addressed as well as may bring together people who wish to volunteer with the agency for a long term relationship. In the Los Angeles area, Operation Sparkle is a bi-annual event of this type organized by the Los Angeles Police Department with other Los Angeles City and County agencies. The Multi-Agency Graffiti Intervention Committee (MAGIC) has community work days to encompass all the County Supervisor Districts for graffiti removal along with a media blitz in order to generate interest. With these community work days, very often people who would not normally ever think of volunteering to help feel free to participate because it is not a large commitment of time.

Court Crews or Inmate Crews are a good source group to build into a program. There is a real impact on any person participating in an illegal activity when they see a crew of inmates working to rectify the problem. Often these types of crews are available to many kinds of outdoor work for little or no charge. In the past, on the Tujunga Ranger District, there has been foreman of inmate crews who specializes in graffiti abatement. These foreman agree to take responsibility of graffiti removal for a portion of the ranger district once the equipment he needs is bought. This frees up Forest Service personnel to work on other responsibilities in the recreation department.

As mentioned earlier, there are community service programs available for agencies to utilize for graffiti abatement. This can be of particular use by graffiti offenders to remove what they have put on in various areas. There is a possibility to set up a special program with the community service to channel people into graffiti removal if they need to work off times say on weekends. This can be an easy way to go, because the community service organization manages the people . The Forest Service does have the responsibility to supervise the people in the field but the liability is the community services organization not the agencies.

III. ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement, particularly law enforcement, is the third and last part of the program. This is the where the majority of the focus on graffiti activity lies for now. The graffiti first came into focus here as the result of the gang enforcement activities. There are usually, several police officers who specialize in reading graffiti for valuable information on gang and tagger activities. Another thing that is helpful with graffiti is not only names/initials of gangs are included but "monikers" or graffiti/gang name of an individual is put up on the area being graffitied. In this way graffiti writers can be tracked as they move through an area.

The unique thing with the Angeles National Forest (or any public lands) is that there are no neighborhoods on the forest so there is no designated "turf". This means that for gangs the forest is open and of course, taggers go anywhere already. The result is that gangs/taggers from miles away will come to the forest to graffiti. There have been incidents with gangs coming from over a 100 miles to the forest. Whether graffitiers are picnicing or involved in recreating on the forest, they almost always leave graffiti. This is their way of exposure, fame, and self expression that is extremely important to them.

A. People

There are various law enforcement agencies at different level trying to combat the graffiti problem. In areas of heavy graffiti all agencies across the board will be involved but usually one will take the lead.

Municipal law enforcement agencies are the first affected by graffiti and certainly have the longest history of graffiti enforcement. Graffiti started with the gangs and the gangs started in the cities. Municipal law enforcement includes police, probation departments; and in large cities transit police or housing authority police. These groups are on the front line and often have the best knowledge of who is doing graffiti.

County law enforcement groups are next, this includes the sheriff's office as well as the jail and probation officers. In the outlaying or rural counties this is often the only law enforcement agency. In larger city areas, such has Los Angeles or San Bernardino Counties, the county law enforcement acts in conjunction with, or substitutes for, the large municipal police departments. Here too is a good pool of information and in rural areas the only information source on graffitiers.

State authorities are generally not as impacted except in specific areas such has parks or in the case of tagger activity, the highway system. Taggers specifically graffiti along the freeway systems, this is the ultimate challenge for the tagging graffitiers to see who can "put up" the most graffiti on the busy freeways of large urban areas.

Federal authorities are affected in cities by graffiti on buildings but the majority of the activity is related to urban National Forest and National Park settings. Other agencies with lands visited by urban populations also receive high graffiti in certain well used sites such as the Bureau of Land Management California Desert District or Army Corps of Engineers Recreation Areas.

B. Programs

Internal training is needed for all field going employees that deal with graffiti. The emphasis is on removal/abatement and not on tracking the resource damage. At present, the Los Angeles County Courts are settling graffiti cases to recover money not only for cleanup, but resource damages. The Forest Service Law Enforcement Incident Report form with pictures and documentation can be used to recover monetary damages. This could allow the government to recover money from a graffitier with a known and proven moniker. The moniker is the same as a legal signature in recent court cases so the Incident Reports become very important.

Another internal emphasis needs to be dealing with the individuals or groups who graffiti. In many cases a non-armed officer should not approach the graffitiers especially in the cases of gang members. Of course working in areas like the Angeles the luxury to not approach these people may not exist on a heavy use day where a recreation crew is working in an area. In this case, public contact training is essential as well as basic law enforcement training. There are also times in heavy use when not even an armed officer should approach graffitiers. When a graffitier is in the act of actually writing or drawing the graffiti, nobody should approach them. They are usually armed at least with a knife like object, if not a gun. Several law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County have had officers injured by approaching a person doing graffiti (personal communications) and now often video or photograph the act then arrest after the graffiti is completed.

External training is needed for Federal Law Enforcement Officers to interface with other agencies in information exchange. The MAGIC committee has been working facilitate information exchange on graffitiers that was not occurring. To this end, the law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles have set up a database for graffiti moniker information exchange. This includes the name of the moniker user, any gang affiliation, arrest record, etc.. Since graffiti has been perceived as an urban problem, the local federal agencies have not been included in alot of training and information exchange. If there is a graffiti problem on a National Forest, the forest will have to make the initial outreach to the local authorities. In talking with local authorities in Southern California they had no idea of the impact of graffiti on the Angeles National Forest. Same as many forest managers, it is hard to realize or readily recognize that an urban forest is just an extension of the urban city environment to the majority of the users.

Multi-agency committees are a very good way to exchange information, put together legislation, influence local politicians, and combine resources. Because of the amount of committee members representing various organizations it is easier to develop groups to tackle specific interest areas. The media is more ready to report on a story or work with a group that has wide representation than dealing with a single agency. The MAGIC group has grown considerably in its first year to include many affected groups. MAGIC was started by the California Department of Transportation to get needed agencies involved with the graffiti problems on the freeways and it has evolved from there.

An advisory group could also be set up but there are fairly stringent federal rules to be followed for this type of group that could be prohibitive. Advisory groups would act in an overseeing role of helping managing the graffiti problem. A group such as this could include law enforcement officers as well as known graffitiers to develop ways to stem or long range stop the behavior on the National Forests. This group could be used in developing or reviewing all phases of the program. The enforcement aspects would be working on security measures to lock up paint, helping law enforcement officers to deal effectively with the graffitiers, working on more effective laws, developing deterrents to stop the graffitiers, and making contacts within the graffiti community to identify who is doing the graffiti.

C. Laws

There are municipal, county, state, and federal laws that address the graffiti problem but none really have much weight behind them. Also since graffiti is not a felony offense, and with the overcrowded court system today, it is not an area in which alot of court emphasis is placed. The court system is so overwhelmed with drug crimes and violent offenses to put a graffitier through the system is not a priority at all. Even to put a juvenile graffitier into jail is difficult in Los Angeles County due to the current overcrowding. Unless the graffitier is very prolific or has been involved in a shooting they will be set free in a time where gang members aren't jailed for killing other gang members until the trial.

In December, 1991 the MAGIC committee sent a memorandum out to the courts, prosecutors, and probation department asking for cooperation and support to deal with the graffiti problem:

> "Public agencies (including law enforcement) are concerned with the penalties that graffiti vandals receive. Why it is not possible to severely punish or incarcerate each graffiti vandal, the penalty should be commensurate with the crime. This will send a strong message to the vandal and the community.
>
> We have found that many families of juveniles cannot and do not pay fines imposed on them by the courts; but the $500 fine suggested for first time offenders will most certainly get their attention. We strongly recommend as a sentence alternative, that community service to include graffiti cleanup and the loss of driving privileges for one year be considered for all offenders."

There has been legislature submitted to the California State Legislature to increase the fines, community service requirements, and requires the defendants to cleanup what they have done. Another piece of legislation is being worked on to lock up the spray cans that are used for graffiti. There is a Los Angeles City and County Ordinance to this effect but the paint industry is legally challenge its applicability.

The Forest Service and other federal agencies used the Code of Federal Regulations or CFR's. The CFR in which graffiti is cited under is Title 36 or 36 CFR 261.9 Property.

The following are prohibited:

(a) Damaging any natural feature or other property of the United States.

This CFR carries a fine of $80.

It is very difficult to catch anyone in the act of graffiting because the majority of the activity is at night. Therefore enforcement has been struggling with how to catch the graffitiers. California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) is testing sensors in high incident areas that trigger alarms in the local L.A.P.D. (Los Angeles City Police Department) office. Video cameras have also been set up in high incident areas.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's (L.A.S.O.) Department cooperating with the Long Beach Police Department recently had a sting operation to catch some individuals. They advertised as a foreign film company making a film on graffiti and approximately fifty graffitiers were arrested in the sting. The RTD police has an undercover operation with officers riding or following buses to catch graffitiers.

All of the above have been specialized operations just to catch graffitiers and they are fairly new ideas. The Angeles National Forest doesn't have the staffing to try such an operation so enforcement is virtually impossible. The only option open is to try and recover damages along with another agency when a known graffitier with moniker is caught but to date this has not been done. This is why the educational and abatement aspects of the program are so important.

CONCLUSION

Graffiti is a major problem in the urban areas of the United States. The urban National Forests are becoming just as effected as the inner city neighborhoods. A program is needed to turn the tide on graffiti before it gets too overwhelming and spreads to other more rural National Forests. A pro-active program of education, abatement, and enforcement are needed to address this problem.

Graffiti is not limited to gangs but there is a new group called taggers who emphasis is to graffiti. As tagging catches on the rest of the Forest Service system should feel the impact. Tagging and graffiti has the potential to spread to the rest of the National Forest System much as mountain bikes and other activities that started first in Southern California.

The Southern California National Forests are being hardest hit with this problem. On the Angeles National Forest because of the proximity to Los Angeles and the multi-cultural users has a tremendous problem already with graffiti. The forest has developed a few things on its own but the need to involved outside agencies and groups is apparent. Through a program such as proposed here it will be possible to accomplish the task of managing the graffiti problem.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions from: Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition, 1988, Simon & Schuster, Inc..

Abatement - a lessening or reduction

Art - 1) Human ability to make things, creativity of man as distinguished from the world of nature. 2) creative work or its principles; making or doing of things that display form, beauty, or unusual perception

Artist - a person who works in or is skilled in the techniques of, any of the fine arts

Celebrity - wide recognition; fame; renown

Creative - having or showing imagination and artistic or intellectual inventiveness

Culture - the ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group, that are transferred, communicated, or passed along, as in or to succeeding generations

Degrade - to lower in rank or status

Degradation - a degraded condition

Delinquent - failing or neglecting to what duty or law requires

Education - the process of training and developing the knowledge, skill, mind, character, etc. especially by formal schooling; teaching; training

Enforcement - to bring about or impose by force

Ethical - 1) conforming to the standards of a given profession or group 2) having to do with ethics or morality of or conforming to moral standards

Ethnic - designating or of a population subgroup having a common cultural heritage, or distinguished by customs, characteristics, language, common history, etc.

Fame - 1) reputation especially good reputation 2) the state of being well known or much talked about, renown, celebrity

Gang - a group or people associated together specifically 1) an organized group of criminals or 2) a group of youths from one neighborhood banded together for social reason; often specifying a band of juvenile delinquents

Graffito(i) - an inscription, slogan, drawing, etc. scratched, scribbled, or drawn often crudely, on a wall or other public surface. (from Italian - a scribbling)

Intervene - to come between as an influencing force as in order to modify, settle, or hinder some action, argument, etc.

Intervention - act of intervening

Moral - relating to, dealing with, or capable of making the distinction between right and wrong in conduct

Multicultural - more than two cultures

Multiethnic - of or having to do with a society, community, etc. made up of people of many different ethnic backgrounds

Public - 1) of, belonging to, or concerning the people as a whole; of or by the community at large 2) for the use or benefit of all; especially supported by government funds

Renown - great fame or reputation, celebrity

Reparation - 1) a repairing or being repaired; restoration to good condition 2) a making amends; making up for a wrong or injury

Reputation - estimation in which a person or thing is commonly held, whether favorable or not; character in the view of the public, the community, etc.

Restitution - 1) a making good for loss or damage; reimbursement 2) a return to a former condition or situation

Unlawful - 1) against the law, illegal 2) against moral or ethical standards

Vandal - a person who, out of malice or ignorance, destroys or spoils any public or private property especially that which is beautiful or artistic

Vandalism - the actions or attitudes of a vandal; malicious or ignorant destruction of public or private property

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CONTACT LIST FOR CLEMSON PROJECT

SGT. Hugh Decker L.A.P.D. DARE Program Leader

REFERRALS

1) Johann Goldberg - Los Angeles City Schools 213-625-4969
Works with DARE and special programs

2) SGT. Jim Johnson - L.A.P.D. Operation Safe Streets 213-603-3100
has statistical information on graffiti and taggers
* visit with later for background information

Referrals

a) SGT. Fletcher - L.A.P.D. Graffiti Cleanup 213-485-3101
member of anti-graffiti task force, meeting Nov 5 1030

1) Steve Valdavia - Youth Gang Services, City Education Program in 18 schools 213-266-4264

2) Gary McAdem - L.A. City Dept. of Public Works 213-237-0359 in charge of researching and testing graffiti products for the City of LA and Paint Tech. Advisor.

b) R.T.D. (now M.T.A.) Police (Sheri Roy-Rameiro) 213-972-7992
Lee Tainter - trains L.A.P.D. & L.A.S.O. in graffiti programs both prevention, apprehension, & educational with gangs and taggers. Training and information tapes, literature are available with in school educational programs being developed. RTD is a multicounty agency so they have taken the lead in this area and have identified numerous gang and graffiti types. visiting 10/31 1100.

Camp Karl Holton - Rolando Santiago and Director Offlee Referrals

Richard Saenz - Supervisory Deputy Probation Officer 818-753-6516
Gang Program Supervisor meeting at office 10/24/91
attending meeting or referrals

a) Ed Young JR. Supervisor Graffiti Reduction Improvement Project or GRIP which includes PROJECT HEAVY that focuses on Taggers. He is also a member of the National Anti-graffiti Network
Jay Beswick President 714-338-7069 out of Crestline CA (now as moved operations to Utah 801-635-0646) who is sending info on Network 10/15/91

b) Officer D. Cohen - Gang officer out of Karl Holton
David Newman - State of CA., Dept. of Youth Authority, Fred C. Nelles School, Whitter, CA. 213-418-1335, Gang Info Coor.

c) Robby Robinson - Gang Probation Officer, Black Gang Expert, & Instructor on graffiti and gangs, 818-753-6579. He is willing to give class on graffiti, gang vs taggers, differances between enthic groups and their graffiti. organizations, signs & needs.

d) Slymar Graffiti Busters - Hanna Dyke & Charlotte Vetter know taggers by name and who operating in our district area.

e) Gang Alternative Prevention or GAP, Sandy Moss 818-575-4059, San Gabriel Probation Office, elementary age kids, counseling and education programs.

Camp Colby Outdoor School Contact

Jim Hastings - Consultant, L.A. County Office of Education, Outdoor & Marine Science Education 213-922-6330

Angeles Forest Supervisor Mike Rogers and F.S. Researcher Alan Ewert referrals

Debbie Chavez, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Riverside Lab, Urban Recreation Research Center & San Gabriel Canyon Researcher.